THE NEW PLAYS

"The Right of Way" Dull and Dismal.

THE rustle of the book-play was heard again last night—but it was the rustle of dead leaves.

Pursuing "The Right of Way" at Wallack's seemed like disturbing the past. Why had Sir Gilbert Parker's novel been dragged from the shelf at this late day? Why had the grizzled orator of the night who acted the author with a French-Canuck dialect from the first hope to the last edition—why had Mr. Eugene W. Presbrey, in other words, meddled with the forgotten Sir Gilbert? Mr. Presbrey, in the course of his unnecessarily extended remarks, intimated that the shock of the electric chair was preferable to the thrill of a Broadway first night. (Hear! Hear!)

Only there wasn't any thrill for us. Even when drunken Charley Steele was stunned on the head in the rummy Cola Dorian and carefully deposited in the river, we didn't see stars. We merely saw moving picture clouds, and the end of the second act of a five-act play. The programme called the divisions Scene 1 and so on, but that didn't shorten matters. The play dragged itself out laboriously and along with it these questions:

"What is Life?"
"What is Death?"
"What is Love?"
"What is Right?"

And then Scene 5 put this staggering collection of conundrums into a box, handed you the box, and asked you to go home and give THE ANSWER!

By answering any one of those questions Mr. Presbrey might have written a good, a beautiful, or a powerful play. But by simply asking questions he first bored his audience and then tired it out completely.

Thanks to Mr. Guy Standing, the first act was interesting. Here, at least, you had a study, the study of Charley Steele before that blow at the grog-shop knocked the wisdom and the whiskey out of him. Mr. Standing disguised himself in something more than a close-cropped beard. And he did more than play the devil with himself and his weak-kneed friends. He didn't use red light, neither was there a cloven foot for the good angel of the last act to round off so that he might walk straight to salvation without limping. It was a clean-cut, intelligent characterization of a man who knew what he was thinking about, flavored with oil and Touchetone rather than fire and brimstone, and handled with the kid gloves of nicety. It was Mr. Standing at his best.

But the best was soon knocked on the head. Two men who were supposed to be scientific or judicial or something equally deadly, came to talk with the lawyer who had saved a murderer's neck and almost drove the audience, as well as Steele, to drink. And then the happy murderer came to kiss Steele's hand and warn him not to go to the Cote Dorian for more drink and more Suzon.

Mr. Theodore Roberts seemed very glad to be a murderer and share the spoils of black type with Mr. Standing, and he pulled vigorously at the tail of "musk-rat French," in the performance of his duty. Mr. Standing very generously gave him the right of way, with the result that Joe Portugais loomed large as a picturesque character, while Steele stood back as a mere man with ordinary human weaknesses. But Mr. Roberts earned his share of the honors honestly, never taking undue advantage of his opportunities, and sounding less loud than he looked.

Mr. Standing cut through the first scene like a keen-edged knife, but more than once the blade was dulled. Miss Alice Lonnon, as the wife who chilled Steele (forgive us our puns) was merely a long blond icicle, and Mr. Martin Sabine as the lover who wouldn't stay jilted was a large cake of masculine ice buttoned up in a frock coat.

It was a relief to escape to the river saloon, where Montreal's less rigid citizens played cards for the drinks and kept something up their sleeves for the thirsty lawyer who liked the barmaid Suzon almost as well as he liked her brandy. It was a scene that carried you back to "Deacon Brodie" and set your nerves to catch a thrill. But the expected thrill went by the board. Even the blow on the head had to be taken for granted when the river rats turned upon Steele and put him where he would have plenty to drink.

That was the last of Steele. After he was saved by the grateful Portugais and taken to a mountain hut, he was simply Standing. He was Standing in rough leather, but with his hair smoothly brushed and his mustache carefully trimmed. He had lost his whiskers and his memory. The past was beyond recall.

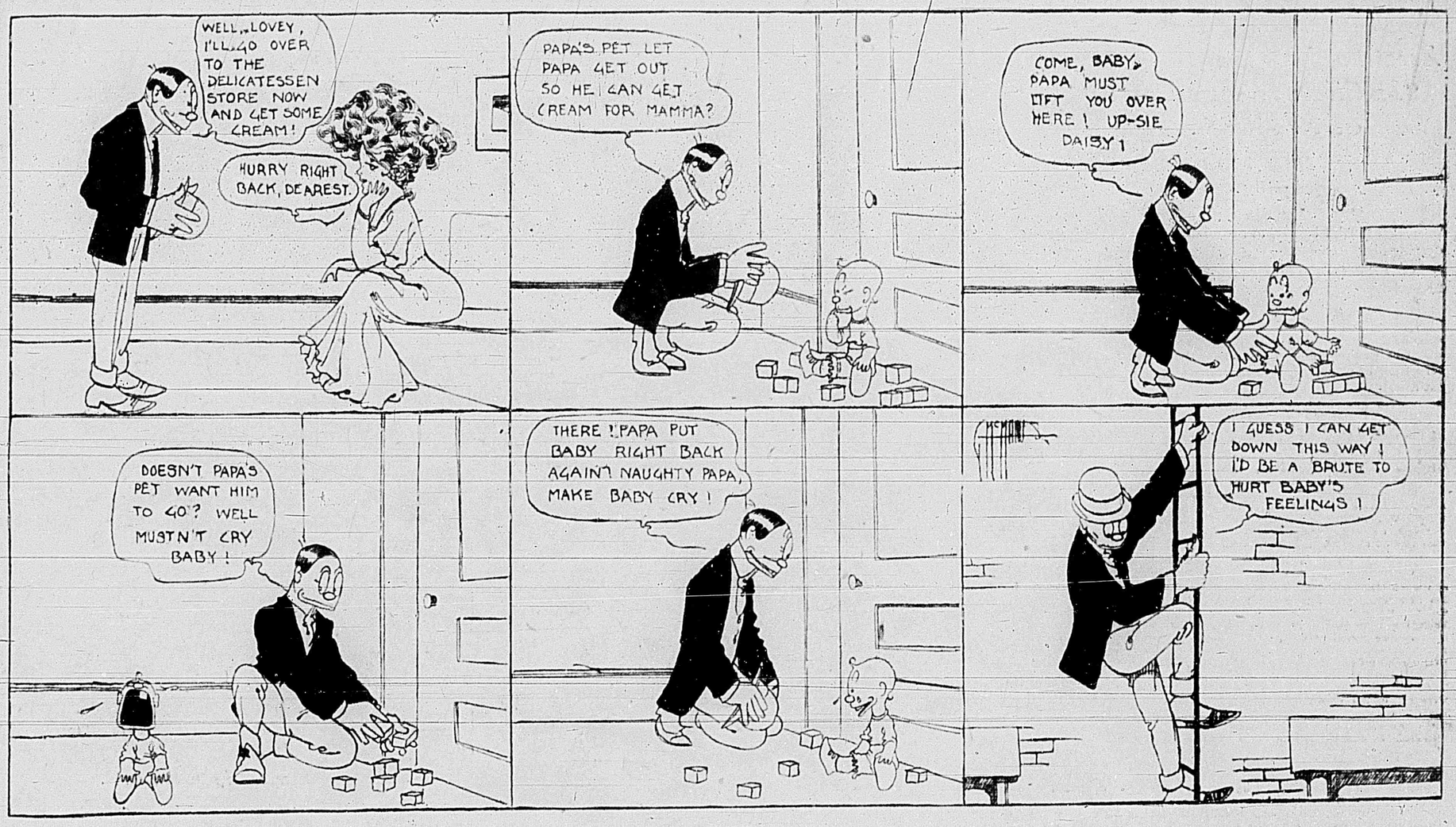
Instead of sending his friends to the devil, Steele was now working for the church, carving images and becoming as wooden as his material. He was no better in this respect when a surgeon operated on his memory and restored it to health. He might have married Rosalie and lived happily ever after had not two runaway thieves recognized him and riled him with a longing to recall the bad old days. Then he remembered he was married and that he couldn't have Rosalie, even though he was supposed to be dead and his wife had become Mrs. Capt. Frockcoat, and was the mother of a little Frockcoat—all of which was shown by newspaper clippings produced by the sympathetic Portugais.

By this time the play had become so dull and dismal that you had very little sympathy with it, and none at all for Miss May Buckley, whose Rosalie was all in her throat and rather hoarse. Of course there was Steele's "renunciation"—set in beautiful mountain scenery, painted by Homer Emeus—but it seemed as old as those glorious hills.

The most cheering thing about "The Right of Way" was the line, "There is Rest for the Weary."

CHARLES DARNTON.

The Newlyweds & Their Baby — By George McManus



The Dainty Little Widow Furnishes a Surprise in "The Courtship of the Boss"

The Courtship of the Boss
By Anne O'Hagan.

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FIRST TWO INSTALMENTS.

Daniel Hennessey, Mayor of Crowley, a town of poor streets and worse suburbs, goes to the rescue of a broken-down furniture van and meets an attractive little lady, Mrs. Downs. He falls in love with her. Finding she has inherited a home in the suburbs and is going to keep boarders, he makes the town improve her neighborhood. She starts to build a breakwater on the river bank in front of her home.

Third Instalment.

"BUT—but," sputtered the Mayor. "We can't allow that, Mrs. Downs. When a lady does us the honor to settle with us, she shouldn't have to—have to"—

"So I think myself, Mr. Hennessey, but I can't have the storms and the river eat away any more of my land. There's a foot gone in places since I came. So I contracted for these rocks—and I'm making a temporary wall. Next summer"—

"Next summer, ma'am," declared the Mayor, with sudden decision, "there'll be two miles of as fine breakwater as you'd want to see along this road. And the city'll build it."

"I'm sure I hope so" said Mrs. Downs with sceptical dryness of intonation.

"You have me word for it, ma'am," said the Mayor at a summer temperature of embarrassment. Then awkwardly enough he persuaded the lady to permit him to drive her along the road for a way, and he felt a thrill of pride when, looking doubtfully from her shabbiness to his seal-lined elegance, she averred that "she wasn't fit."

Back in the City Hall by and by, he sent for young Donahue and for young Wilson. Young Donahue learned that he was to introduce a bill providing for a breakwater along the River Way, for a two-mile stretch of macadam road, for the planting of new shrubbery and for the cutting through of a street behind the few dwellings that fronted on the river. Nothing but the boundlessness of his belief in his boss saved him from panic.

"Do—do you—think it'll go through?" he asked.

"It'll go through," answered the Mayor shortly.

Young Wilson, tall, slim, blond and indolent, had, for his uncle's sake, to draw a salary. But he was a foolish youth, scarcely fit even for the ornamental secretaryship created for him in the office of the Commissioner of Docks. To-day Mayor Hennessey decided that he should "earn his keep."

"Where are you livin', Wilson?" he demanded abruptly.

"Up at Mrs. Snyder's," replied the astonished Wilson.

The Mayor considered how to make it up to Snyder.

"Like it there?"

"First-rate place," replied Wilson, examining his nails carefully. He was reported in City Hall circles to be addicted to the manicure habit.

"Could you move—to oblige me?" said the Mayor. Mr. Wilson bestowed, a sharper glance than usual on his chief.

"Shouldn't care to," he drawled. Then he explained. "You see, I've been there two years and it's homelike and—er"—he finished with a simper.

"Making up to Snyder's girl, eh? Well, what I've in mind would do you no harm there. You'll get her all the quicker for not bein' under her feet the whole time, and I'll square it with the missus. Now I want"—and he schedulled what he wanted.

Of course, he had his own way. Wilson might sigh and grumble and declare that it was too far out for a person who liked to see a little life of an evening, but Wilson knew that he must be persuaded or lose the easy secretaryship, and he was persuaded.

All that week the Mayor's obscure agents were busy searching the titles of the River Way estates and bargaining with the long-disgusted holders of them. Had Daniel Hennessey appeared as a purchaser the owners would have suspected expensive schemes and would have held their land dear. But only a few poor fellows, not even real estate speculators, wanted to buy. They had to buy on small mortgages. The estates went very cheaply, and the mortgages were cleared with astonishing speed after the transfers had been made to Mr. Daniel Hennessey.

Then Mr. Hennessey worked with his Aldermen, his Common Council and his Board of Public Works. They did not see at first just what was in it, but under the guidance of their astute chief, gain their vision gradually cleared.

Nearly two miles of river-front land in his possession; a breakwater and a macadam roadway in front; a street opened through in the rear; a branch of the main trolley line running along that new street; what more natural than the formation of the River Way Real Estate Company, the erection of villas—all chocolate-colored gables and crushed strawberry porticos and shallow, cream-colored bay windows? A great light began to break in upon the municipal brains. Then there was the Point, three miles further on, where the river made its deep dip and the land was a wooded promontory. There was a beach there—a fine sand beach. Picture the macadam road and the buttress against the water continued to this point on one side and the trolley buzzing through to it on the other! Was there anything the matter, the Mayor would like to know, with organizing the Laurel Point Pleasure Resort Association? The Mayor's friends enthusiastically agreed that there was not, only one irrelevant man venturing to point out that there were no laurels within two hundred miles of the little cape.

So the Mayor worked and manipulated and waited. To his allies he seemed, as usual, a great and genial organizer who never "forgot his friends." But he knew himself for the humbler wooer of energetic Maria Downs.

Maria Downs did not know him so. Had he informed her that a sea-wall was building because she had stood one windy morning directing two rude masons before her house, or that "Restricted villas" were rearing themselves in pink and yellow-gabled angularity that she might have neighbors of the safe sort, or that a trolley line ran to her back door that her boarders might travel to and fro with ease and her venture prove successful, she would only have thought him a more elaborate liar than she had been already taught to believe him. And perhaps her scepticism would have proved more nearly true than his fancy, for certain it is that his active mind had more pleasure in this indirect pursuit of her than the chase of an inamorata often affords a man.

The Mayor was a frequent visitor at the big boarding-house, where he marvelled to find her open fire more attractive than his gilded radiators. He wondered, too, why her homely workbasket seemed so much more of an ornament on her red-covered table than the jade card receiver on his marble-top at home. But, slow to unfamiliar sentiment and awkward in her actual presence, he never put the questions to her. The years when women had muttered to him had done their work.

As the third Christmas of Maria's residence in Crowley approached, the Mayor took a great and courageous resolve. Something softer than usual in her self-reliant face, a little touch of pensiveness about her firm lips, a cloudy glamour sometimes before her gray eyes, inspired him with a more tumultuous sensation than ever, when he was with her, and with a greater restlessness when he was in his own barren house. He looked upon what he had done for her and he was glad and proud. He would claim his reward! As a humbler mood prevailing, he would decide to beg her to take pity on his loneliness. He would ask her to play hostess at his New Year's reception.

"An' if she mentions clothes an' things," he said to himself, as he drove along the rehabilitated River Way by the white brilliancy of the December stars and the great arc-lights, "I'll tell her we'll go over to Puree the week after, an' she can get what she wants."

The old Blair place beamed rosy and yellow out into the white radiance of the night. The Mayor's heart thumped painfully and his fingers trembled as he fastened the wedding-rose to the bit. His voice was a little thick as he asked for Mrs. Downs, and the smiling maid admitted him.

Mrs. Downs came in after a brief delay. There was a flush on her cheek like a young girl's, and her eyes were starry. Her plain frock was exchanged for something that fluted and fluttered about the throat. The Mayor surveyed her with an agitated pride.

They wished each other a merry Christmas and drew their chairs before the fire. The Mayor tugged at his big mustache and cleared his throat many times. Then he played with the cat. Mrs. Downs gazed silently at the blaze. Suddenly she turned toward him.

"I want to tell you something," she said with her old directness. "You're my oldest friend here; you gave me my start with the dray and the driver and—and my first boarder. You remember. Well—I'm going to be married."

Daniel stared at her, his big red face expressionless, his eyes like two bits of dull blue china. She hurried on nervously.

"It's Ed—Mr. Wilson. You're responsible, you see, for it all."

A slow amazement crept over Daniel's face. He was galvanized into speech, and with one sentence showed how vast a gulf lies between tact with men and tact with women.

"Why, he's nothing but a boy!" he blurted out.

Brickish red traveled slowly up Maria's sensible face.

"He is older than you think," she said, stiffly, "and maybe I'm not so old."

Daniel looked at her with drooping jaw for a minute.

"Maybe," he acquiesced finally, but it was the acquiescence of an unbeliever. "And you don't know," she hurried on, ashamed of her brief animosity, "how a woman who's had a hard time—and none too much pleasure or likin' in her life, wants it when it comes. You see," she wound up with a final attempt at naïveté, "you're a hard-headed business man and a politician, and you don't believe you know about romance."

The Mayor stared at her from glazed eyes for a minute. "I guess you're right," he agreed at last. He rose and, going to the red-curtained window, looked out across the sloping lawn, flecked with lights from the house. The smooth road above the river shone white in the night. He could hear the water softly beating the stone defense he had made against it. There was a dull weight in his chest.

"I guess you're right," he said as he turned back to the room and stretched out his big hand in congratulation. "I guess you're right. Romance ain't in my line."

(THE END.)

BETTY VINCENT'S ADVICE TO LOVERS

LONG ENGAGEMENTS.

IN this speed-mad age when even love has succumbed to the hurry call long engagements seem to be in high disfavor with the rising generation. However, we occasionally hear of some patient couple who after many years of waiting at last take the matrimonial plunge. If impetuous lovers would follow an example of this kind and wait until they at least know something of their lady loves a great deal of unhappiness could be avoided.

Thorough knowledge of each other's character, habits and disposition is essential to a successful marriage, and those who marry in haste will be sure to repent at leisure. No man or woman can learn to understand each other in two or three weeks or even months, and the wise couple who seek happiness will prefer to find out each other's numerous faults and fads before they enter double harness.

The present day suitor is apt to be impatient, demanding all at once. If he is wise he will be content with a less hurried and strenuous courtship, for the couple who are thoroughly cognizant with each other's character are the ones who will make of marriage a lifelong success.

Not Introduced.

Dear Betty:

WHILE loitering on a corner I met a young lady. We made a date, which she failed to keep, telling me she was sick. Shall I continue the acquaintance? L. B.

Acquaintances made in that haphazard way are most inadvisable. You know nothing at all concerning the young lady, and as she has already disappointed you, it is best to give her up.

Religion an Obstacle.

Dear Betty:

I AM twenty and am very much in love with a young man one year my senior. We are of different religions, I being Catholic, so we are very undecided what to do. This is the only obstacle. D. S. L.

If you love each other your religion should be no obstacle to your marriage. There are many happy marriages where there is a difference in religion.

Give Him Up.

Dear Betty:

I HAVE been going with a gentleman for quite some time. I found out that he was going with another girl. He admitted it, but stated that he could not give her up just now. I refused to go with him, but he continued to call on me and I promised him I would go with him if he discontinued his friendship with this other girl. I waited a few months, there was no change, so I told him I did not care for him any longer, and he felt just as badly about it as I did. He wants me to wait a little longer. I know he cares for me, but he is easily led by this other girl. Shall I wait or give him up?

C. C. T.

You have given him his chance and he has not given her up. I think it advisable to give him up, as he seems rather weak and probably would not make a good husband. There are plenty of others.

What's Your Luck? Horoscope for TO-Day

By Ali Baba Boo.

Tuesday, Nov. 5, 1907.

A GOOD day for household affairs and fishing.

Those whose birthdate this is must use care this year. Men are threatened with a twelvemonth full of puzzling business changes. Women have an opportunity coming to travel far.

The girl born to-day will marry a man who will most probably be poor rather than rich throughout life; but they will be happy together notwithstanding.

Curb foolish extravagance in the boy born to-day. He will earn much money, but is sadly in danger of wasting it.

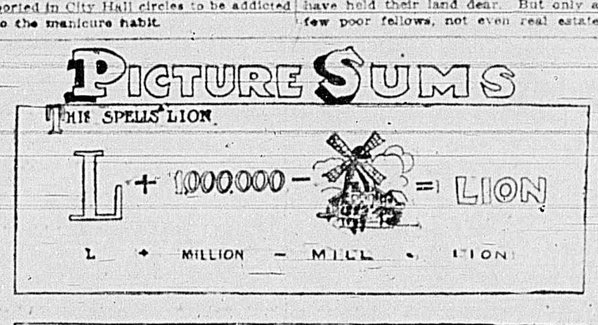
TO CHORD WITH IT.

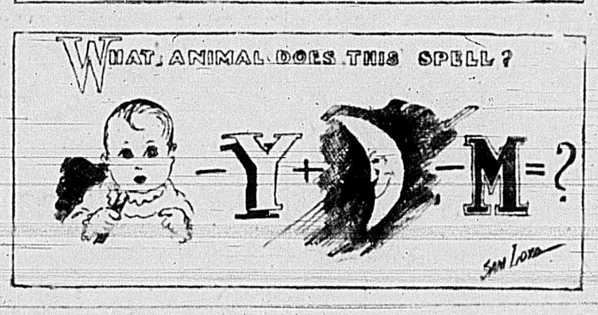
"Todd, your wife has a voice like velvet."

"Gracious! Don't talk so loud. If she heard you I should have to get her a new dress to match it."—Tit-Bits.

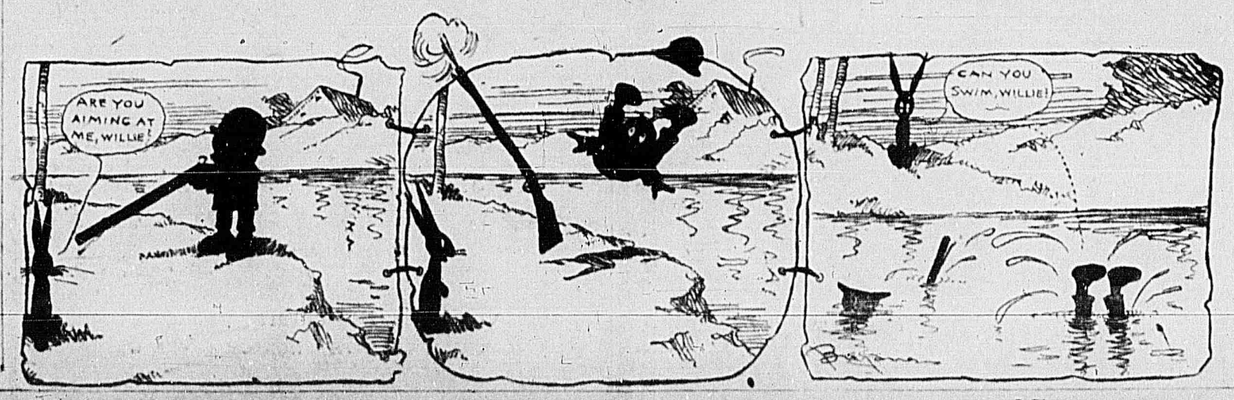
PICTURE SUMS

THIS SPELLS LION.

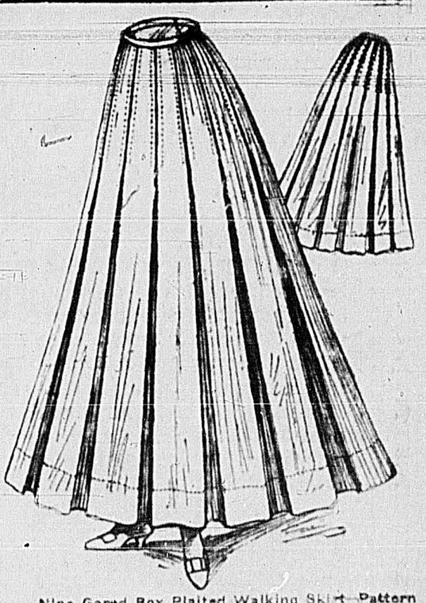




The Hunter Is Loose in the Land — By J. K. Bryans



May Manton's Daily Fashions.



THIS box plaited skirt is designed for the fashionable walking length and is appropriate for almost every skirting material, while it is adapted both to the coat suits and the odd skirts. In the illustration it is made of royal blue cheviot simply finished with a stitched hem. The stitched hem is an all sufficient finish, but if liked, banding, either of the same or of contrasting material, can be applied above it. The skirt is cut in nine gores and is laid in box plaits, the edges of which meet at the upper portion and which effectually conceal the seams.

The quantity of material required for the medium size is 11 1-4 yards 27, 6 1-4 yards 44 or 52 inches wide.

Pattern No. 5756 is cut in sizes for a 22, 24, 26, 28 and 30 inch waist.

Nine Gored Box Plaited Walking Skirt—Pattern No. 5756.

How to Obtain These Patterns: Call or send by mail to THE EVENING WORLD MAY MANTON FASHION BUREAU, No. 21 West Twenty-third street, New York. Send ten cents in coin or stamps for each pattern ordered. IMPORTANT—Write your name and address plainly, and always specify size wanted.

A Heart-Gripping Romance of Love, Politics, Intrigue and Adventure—The Story of "THE MAN OF THE HOUR"—Begins To-Morrow